WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A food product comprising at least one cocoa polyphenol and L-arginine in a combined amount effective to induce a physiological increase in nitric oxide production in a mammal after ingesting the food product.

2. A food product comprising (i) a procyanidin selected from the group consisting of cocoa, nut, or mixtures, wherein the amount of the procyanidin(s) are at least about 200 mg/ per 100 g of the food product, and (ii) L-arginine, wherein the amount of L-arginine is at least about 0.9 g per 100 g of the food product.

3. The food product of Claim 2, wherein the L-arginine is at least about 1.2 g per 100 g of the food product.

4. The food of Claim 2, wherein the L-arginine is at least about 1.6 g per 100 g of the food product.

5. The food product of Claim 2, wherein the procyanidin(s) are at least about 300 mg per 100 g of the food product.

6. The food product of Claim 3, wherein the procyanidin(s) are at least about 300 mg per 100 g of the food product.

7. The food product of Claim 5, wherein the L-arginine is at least about 1.6 g per 100 g of the food product.

8. The food product of Claim 2, wherein the procyanidin is a cocoa procyanidin.

9. The food product of Claim 2, wherein the procyanidin is acocoa procyanidin and a nut procyanidin.

10. The food product of Claim 2, wherein the procyanidin is a nut procyanidin.

11. The food product of Claims 1, 2, 8, 9, or 10, wherein the L-arginine is provided by at least one food ingredient selected from the group consisting of nuts, legumes, seeds, and gelatin.

12. The food product of Claim 11, wherein the L-arginine-containing ingredient is a meat, a skin, a paste, or a flour from the nuts, the legumes, or the seeds.

13. The food product of Claim 12, wherein the nut is selected from the group consisting of peanuts, walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, pecans, cashews and macadamia nuts; wherein the legume is soy beans; and wherein the seeds are selected from the group consisting of sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, flax seeds, and pumpkin seeds.

14. The food product of Claims 8 or 9, wherein the cocoa procyanidin is provided by at least one cocoa ingredient.

15. The food product of Claim 14, wherein the cocoa ingredient is roasted cocoa nibs or fractions thereof, chocolate liquor, partially defatted cocoa solids, fully defatted cocoa solids, or mixtures thereof.

16. The food product of Claims 1, 2, 8, 9, or 10, wherein the food product is a confectionery, a condiment, a baked good, a grain-based bar, a meal replacement bar, a beverage mix, a beverage, or a pet food.

17. The food product of Claim 1, 2, 8, or 9, wherein the cocoa procyanidin is provided by a cocoa extract.

18. The food product of Claim 17, wherein the cocoa extract is present in an amount of at least about 25 mg per 100 g of food product.

19. The food product of Claim 16, wherein the food product is a non-chocolate food product.

20. The food product Claim 19, wherein the non-chocolate food product is a peanut-based food product.

21. The food product of Claim 16, wherein the food product is a chocolate food product.

22. The food product of Claim 1 or 2, wherein the chocolate food product is a chocolate confectionery containing at least about 200 mg of total procyanidins per 100 g of the chocolate confectionery and at least about 0.9 g of L-arginine per 100 g of the chocolate confectionery.

23. The food product of Claim 21, wherein the chocolate confectionery comprises a dark chocolate.

24. The food product Claim 21, wherein the chocolate confectionery comprises a milk chocolate.

25. The food product of Claim 16, wherein the food product contains nuts with skins, ground nut skins, or mixtures thereof.

26. A pharmaceutical composition comprising cocoa and nut procyanidin(s), L-arginine, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, wherein the procyanidin(s) and L-arginine are added in a combined amount effective to provide a cardiovascular benefit in a mammal after the composition is ingested.

27. A pharmaceutical composition comprising cocoa and nut procyanidin(s), L-arginine, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, wherein the procyanidin(s) and L-arginine are added in a combined amount effective to act as a nitric oxide or nitric oxide synthase modulating agent in a mammal after the composition is ingested.

28. The composition of Claim 26 or 27, wherein the procyanidin(s) are procyanidin(s) present in an amount between 10 mg to about 5 g per unit dose and wherein the L-arginine is present in an amount of about 100 mg to about 30 grams per unit dose.

29. The composition of Claim 28, wherein the procyanidin(s) are 25 mg to 3 g and the L-arginine is 0.5 g to 10 g.

30. The composition of Claim 26 or 27, wherein the cocoa procyanidin(s) are the pentamers to the nonamers.